

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
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UNCLAS MUNICH 0048

EO. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: STRAUSS SEES 1977 AS "YEAR OF GREAT PROBLEMS" FOR FRG

1. SUMMARY: CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS SEES 1977 AS YEAR OF POLITICAL CRISIS FOR FRG. IN SIGNED LEAD ARTICLE IN JANUARY 8 ISSUE OF CSU ORGAN "BAYERN KURIER," STRAUSS LAMBASTES "LEFT-BLOCK COALITION" FOR ALLEGED MISMANAGEMENT OF ECONOMY, ESPECIALLY PENSION SYSTEM, AND INABILITY TO COPE WITH FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS ON HORIZON. ARTICLE REPRESENTS ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON SPD-FDP COALITION.

2. COALITION'S DOMESTIC POLICY: USING SUCH LOADED PHRASES AS "LEFT COALITION," AND "LIBERAL-SOCIALISTIC RESPONSIBILITY" FOR GOVERNING FRG, STRAUSS DELIVERS HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON SPD-FDP COALITION. HE ACCUSES COALITION OF FRAUD IN LEADING ELECTORATE TO BELIEVE ECONOMY IS ON RISE AND STATE FINANCES IN ORDER. REALITY IS THAT PENSION-FINANCING CONCEPTS OF

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COALITION ARE INADEQUATE TO SOLVE PROBLEM OF SPIRALLING OUTLAYS FOR PENSIONS. MOREOVER, "SECOND STORM OF REBELLION" AMONG WAGE-EARNERS WILL COME IN SUMMER OF 1977 WHEN INDIVIDUAL WORKER WILL BE FORCED TO PAY HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH HAVE REACHED DIZZYING HEIGHTS.

3. FOREIGN POLICY: IN SOMEWHAT MILDER VEIN, STRAUSS CLAIMS

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT IS INCAPABLE OF CARRYING OUT HIS FOREIGN POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES. STRAUSS MAINTAINS IT IS NOT RPT NOT ENOUGH TO CALL FOR EUROPEAN UNITY AND TO PRAISE U.S. AS ALLY WHILE AT SAME TIME USING "EMPTY FORMULATIONS," WHICH WOULD NOT EVEN FIND PLACE AMONG HACKNEYED PHRASES OF U.N., TO DESCRIBE "BLOODY TRAGEDIES." AS EXAMPLE OF SUCH FORMULATIONS, STRAUSS CITES SCHMIDT'S RECIPES FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH ARE ALLEGEDLY CHARACTERIZED BY RECKLESSNESS AND LACK OF KNOWLEDGE AND CONTEXT. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD THING, IN STRAUSS' VIEW, IF HEAD OF GERMAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT WELFARE OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE OF GERMAN ORIGIN IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA.

4. COMMENT: THIS ARTICLE IS INDICATION THAT STRAUSS INTENDS TO MAINTAIN STEADY PRESSURE ON SECOND SCHMIDT-GENSCHER GOVERNMENT, AND SENSES THAT IT MAY BE VULNERABLE FROM VERY FIRST DAYS OF ITS EXISTENCE. SUCH LABELS AS "LEFT-BLOCK COALITION" SEEM DESIGNED TO PLAY ON ANY FEELINGS OF DISCOMFORT ABOUT CONTINUING COALITION WITH SPD WHICH GENSCHER AND FDP MAY HAVE. BETTS

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